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Next Centralised Baptism Preparation Session
Parents planning to have their child baptised are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session. Next sessions are at the MacKillop and Glowrey Rooms, St. Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat, **Thursday, March 7, 2024.** You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

Laudato Si': Everything is connected- "Think before you buy" Did you know? A great way to reduce waste is to think about whether you need something before you buy it. See if you can buy it second hand rather than new. Buying from small local business is also a good way to reduce your environmental impact.

Child Safe Church The Parishes of St Columba's & Our Lady Help of Christians (including Lexton, Miners Rest and Waubra) follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we also implement procedures and standards as directed by the Ballarat Diocesan Office. You can download our Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy from the Parish website or on the foyer notice board. If you have any concerns whatsoever—please contact the Parish Office, Fr. Marcello or one of the Safe Guarding Officers at wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Pope Francis' Prayer for Peace in Ukraine: I ask you to pray the Our Father for peace in Ukraine, now and throughout this day. **Our Father...**

Let us ask the Lord to grant that the country may grow in the spirit of brotherhood, and that all hurts, fears and divisions will be overcome. We have spoken about the Holocaust. But let us think too that [in Ukraine] millions of people were killed [1932-1933]. They are a people who have suffered; they have suffered from hunger, suffered from much brutality and they deserve peace.

May the prayers and supplications that today rise up to heaven touch the minds and hearts of world leaders, so that dialogue may prevail and the common good be placed ahead of partisan interests. Please, no more war.



Laudato Si'



"Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (Laudato Si', 217).

reduce reuse recycle rethink repurpose



Parishes of St Columba's and Our Lady Help of Christians

Communities of Ballarat North, Lexton, Miners Rest, Waubra, Wendouree

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au (select Parish)



Office: 306 Gregory St, Ballarat Nth **Phone:** 5331 1012
Email: ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Office: 480a Gillies Street, Wendouree **Phone:** 5339 2302

Email: wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au

P O Box 192, Wendouree

School Principal: Leigh Bradshaw

School Co-Principals: Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr

School Phone: 5332 4894

School Phone: 5339 4726

Staffing

Parish Priest:
Fr Marcello Colasante

Finance Officer:
Bernadette Prestwood

St Columba's
Parish Co-Ordinator:
Lia Andanar Yu

Wed-Friday 10:00am -2:00pm
Safeguarding Officer:

Peter Marquand
Our Lady Help of Christians

Parish Co-ordinator and
Safeguarding Officer:
Maree Roache

Wed-Friday 9:00am -1:00pm
MASS TIMES (This week)

St Columba's
Sunday 10.00 am
Wednesday 10.00 am

Our Lady Help of Christians
Waubra 1st & 3rd Sunday 8.30 am
Beaufort 2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am
Lexton 5th Sunday 8.30 am

Wendouree
Saturday (Vigil) 6.00 pm
Thursday 10.00 am
Friday 10.00 am

Readings for Next Weekend

Exodus 20: 1—17
Psalm 18: 8-11 R. Jn 6:68
1 Corinthians 1: 22-25
John 2:13-25



25th February 2024 ~ Second Sunday of Lent Year B

Focus on the Scriptures

Called to Listen The wilderness was the geographical and key symbolic focus of last week's gospel story. This week, the focus is a mountain. Wilderness and mountain remind us that God's Earth itself is the locus of mystery and grace, the place of Earth-divine encounter. The mountain, like the wilderness, links Mark's story of Jesus with the story of the Israelites. Moses' encounter with God on the mountain of Sinai was a defining moment in the life of the people: the Israelites entered into covenant with God at this mountain and received the Law that was to guide their lives as a people. Some centuries later, at a time of crisis in Israel's life, the prophet Elijah returned to this mountain and experienced the presence of God in the gentle breeze (1 Kings 19:10-13).

In the gospel passage for today, Jesus takes Peter, James and John up the mountain and is "transfigured" before them and "his clothes become dazzling white". In the Book of Revelation, white clothes come to symbolise the clothing of martyrs, of those who die for their faith. Elijah and Moses, the key prophetic figures of Israel, appear and enter into dialogue with Jesus, God's definitive prophet. The "transfiguration" seems to point to a time in Jesus' ministry when he accepts his likely fate. If he continues to challenge oppression and injustice, he is certain to encounter opposition, even death. He struggles with that realisation in the "wilderness" and comes to terms with what it involves on this unidentified mountain.

The voice of God reaffirms the identity of Jesus that was announced in the opening words of the gospel and proclaimed at his baptism in the Jordan. It calls for a response from the disciples who have ascended the mountain in his company: they are to listen to him. In the two preceding scenes, Jesus has spoken of the suffering that he and his followers will have to face. These words are crucial to an understanding, not only of Jesus, but of what it means to follow him. They fall on deaf ears.

Peter wants to hold on to the experience of glory, to "make tents" and settle down. He prefers not to face the difficulties involved in fidelity to the mission. But that is not the way of discipleship. Like Jesus and his companions, we too need the occasional glimpse of final victory. We also need the courage and the good sense to return from the mountain and follow through on the path that brings life, despite the pain. We can feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenges facing us and by the opposition we sometimes experience. While so many lives and so many life forms are obliterated by fruitless wars and unsustainable dependence on fossil fuels, we are called to "listen" and come to terms with the costs involved in maintaining the struggle for a sustainable, safe, and peace-filled world.

~ Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) I will walk in the presence of the Lord, in the land of the living.

Gospel Acclamation: Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! From the shining cloud, the Father's voice is heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Stan Birkett

Anniversaries: We remember: Marianne Kenna, Sr Irene Monigatti RSM, Eileen Donovan, Ronald Tuppen, Carolyn Jordan

We pray: for all in areas of conflict, war and natural disasters, for those who are sick in our parish and all in need of our prayers.

Mercy Connect- A call for volunteers in the Ballarat Diocese The Mercy Connect Program (part of Mercy Works) recruits, trains and supports volunteer mentors/tutors to assist students of refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds. Volunteers work under the supervision of teachers during school terms with ongoing training and support. For details please contact Clare Bennett or Kath Cooney 0415 246640 or email katherine.cooney@mercyworks.org.au

Wisdom At the Cathedral All welcome to the first talk for the year in the Cathedral parish's series Wisdom at the Cathedral. Fr Bill Lowry from the Warrnambool parish will speak on *Discerning God's Will in Your Life*. Learn about the processes employed by the saints and the Lord himself in discerning the Father's will for their lives. The talk and discussion time will go for an hour and will be followed by a cup of tea. 7pm sharp, Thursday 29 February in the MacKillop/Glowrey rooms. Entry by donation. For all enquiries please contact Fiona Bradley on fionalouisebradley@gmail.com.

Mass of the Oils 2024 & 150th Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat The Mass of the Oils this year will incorporate acknowledgement of the 150th Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat and will be held on Monday, March 25, 2024 at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat at 11.30am (please note change of time). Lunch and displays will follow in the Hall. At the Mass we are inviting 1 – 2 volunteers from each parish to present a symbol or photo that best represents their parish. Many parishes have multiple communities, so the symbol or photo can represent the whole parish or it can be something from the different communities. The symbol/photo framed should be 5in x 7in (12cm x 17.5cm) or for the larger parishes who may need more room, up to 8in x 10in (20cm x 25cm) size framed.

East Timor Knitting After a successful effort last year, it would be nice to have some additional people to knit the little sets or crochet the rugs. Donations of time, 8ply acrylic yarn or money to buy the yarn (if you don't knit or crochet) are welcome. Contact Lauren 0405277778 with donations or money or alternatively money can be put in an envelope marked East Timor Project and left on the collection plates at OLHC or St Columba's Church.


St Columba's March 3rd		Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Mark Lacey	
COMMENTATOR	Vicki Moroney	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Min Myers	
COMMUNION MINISTER	Gina Hinchey	
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Fiona Newton	
SACRISTAN	Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe	

Collections Last Weekend Columba's Thank you for your contributions.
 Presbytery: \$ 308.00 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,610.00

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Parishes of St. Columba's Ballarat North and Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree recognise the traditional owners of parish lands. We acknowledge their ancestors with respect and we are committed to working for justice and reconciliation.

150th Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat The Diocese of Ballarat will turn 150 on March 30, 2024. This year there will be many events to acknowledge this significant anniversary. Keep up-to-date at the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/our-diocese/150th-anniversary-of-the-diocese-of-ballarat/> Anniversary Prayer Cards are available at the church foyer. Please feel free to get your copy.

Mission: Transform Lives - theirs... and yours Communities in Africa, Asia,  Palms Australia Australia and the Pacific are looking for qualified and experienced Australians from ALL sectors to share their skills with those who have had little opportunity for formal training. You, too, will learn and grow within a most welcoming community. Experience the joy as you assist to change lives. Bishop Paul has written a letter of endorsement for the work of Palms Australia. Learn more at <https://palms.org.au/> or ph. 02 9560 5333. Join the Mission Webinar on March 5, 2024, 6.00pm –6.30pm <https://palms.org.au/event/global-development-webinar/> or join the two-week tour to Timor-Leste on 06/05/2024 to see Palms program participants our local partner communities in action together <https://palms.org.au/encounters/timor-leste-cultural-encounter/>

Baptism This weekend we welcome to our Parish through the sacrament of Baptism:

Nina Florence Ward and Louie Donald Ward, children of Simon and Samantha.

"The Church gives the faith to your children through Baptism and you have the task to make it grow...." - Pope Francis



May Nina and Louie grow in faith with the support of their family and our Catholic Community.

World Day of Prayer 2024 – Friday, March 1 This year's theme is "I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love," based on Ephesians 4:1-6.

World Day of Prayer services in Ballarat and Creswick this year on Friday, March 1:

- * 10.00am at St Peter's Anglican Church, 1307 Sturt Street West, Ballarat
- * 6.00pm at St Paul's Anglican Church, 3 Humffray Street, Bakery Hill
- * 7.00pm at St John's Anglican Church, 103 Napier Street, Creswick



Project Compassion Sunday 24 & 25 February



Ronita is 22. She lives with her husband and two children in a barangay (local district) in Quezon City, which is situated in Metro Manila in the Philippines. Ronita left school when she became pregnant as a teenager. This could have had a life-long impact on her ability to find work and provide for her family but, thankfully, she heard about the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program run by the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ), Caritas Australia's local partners in the Philippines. Through the FCJ, Ronita was able to re-enrol in her studies and continue learning in a safe and flexible environment – even with the arrival of her second child. After completing her ALS classes, Ronita went on to earn her Grade 12 Senior High School Diploma. With her new diploma, Ronita has now secured a job at a call centre and is looking to a brighter future for her whole family. "I have now graduated senior school and I am so proud of myself," she said. "I feel hopeful for the future... Now it's not impossible for me to achieve my dream... Thank you." Please donate to Project Compassion. Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow for all future generations. You can donate



through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion or by calling 1800 024 413. **Please donate to Project Compassion** You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion or by calling 1800 024 413.

Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

Pope's intention for February- For the terminally ill: Let us pray that the sick who are in the final stages of life, and their families, receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment.

OLHC March 2nd	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG	Sue Searls	
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL	Lyn Gray	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Zeena Lazarus & Vin Dillon	
COMMUNION MINISTERS	Pauline Newman & Helen Feely	
SACRISTAN	Anne Slattery	

Collections Last weekend OLHC Thank you for your contributions.
 Presbytery: \$ 411.05 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 435.00